

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the final Office Action mailed on December 1, 2004. Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Claims 17-20 have been withdrawn previously. Claims 1-6 are allowed. In the Office Action, Claims 9-10 and 13-14 are objected to, Claims 11 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 and Claims 7-8, 12 and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. In response Claims 7-10 and 15-16 have been canceled. Claim 11 has been amended, and Claims 21-24 have been added. These amendments do not add new matter. In view of the amendments and/or for the response set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, Claims 11 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,921,168 to Nello ("*Nello*"). Claims 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,584,888 to Cortese ("*Cortese*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,440,972 to English ("*English*"). Claims 12, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Nello* in view of *English*.

At the outset, Claims 7-10 and 15-16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and thus, the rejections with respect to same have been rendered moot. Claims 11-14 have been made dependent from the allowed Claim 1, and thus, the rejections with respect to same have been rendered moot.

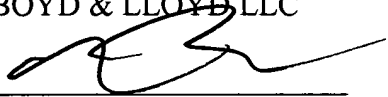
In the Office Action, Claims 9-10 and 13-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, new Claims 21-24 have been added and effectively represent the subject matter as defined in Claims 9-10 and 13-14 in allowable form as suggested by the Patent Office. Claim 21 represents the subject matter as defined in Claims 7 and 9. Claim 22 represents the subject matter as defined in Claims 7 and 10. Claim 23 represents the subject matter as defined in Claims 11 and 13. Claim 24 represents the subject matter as defined in Claims 11 and 14.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-identified patent application and earnestly solicit an early allowance of same.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 26, 2005